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Stablish, continue our march,  
On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the City of God."

WILLIAM NORTH RICE.

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### AMERICA AND CHINESE EDUCATION

Roderick Scott, Dean of Fukien Christian University,  
Foochow, China.

"There is nothing which one hears so often from the lips of the representatives of Young China as that education is the sole means of reconstructing China." And with this dictum that education is the panacea for China's ills, it is evident that Dr. Dewey agrees, in his article in the *New Republic* for March 1, 1922, in which, under the title of "America and Chinese Education," he charges American or rather American missionary education in China with failure in several important respects.

And "to transform the mind of China" may fairly be taken as the central point in Dr. Dewey's own many addresses given in China. The so-called Literary Revolution or Renaissance, which is fathered by several of the progressive members of the faculty of the Government University in Peking, naïve as some of its manifestations are, he must regard with some pride, as being in part due to his influence. With its latest outgrowth, the Anti-Religion Union, of which news has come to us within the month, and which will probably have no more life than the now defunct pro-Confucian movement of four years back, he would certainly have nothing to do. Mr. Dewey, in all his China talks, never spoke either against the work of missions or against religion; he simply ignored religion.

At this point, of course, the missionary motive differs from him and from Young China as quoted above. Not to transform the mind of China; but, in the words of one of my colleagues, "to transfuse vital truth into the heart of China; to produce, not individualism, but individuality, not self-assurance, but self-reliance, not self-expression, but self-control,"—that is, in character as well as in education, the missionary sees the solu-

tion of China's problems. "Underneath our political troubles lies something deeper still—our moral and religious lack." The words are David Yui's, one of the People's Delegates to Washington.

It is just on this point of character that an answer can be given to the charges made in Dr. Dewey's article, that missionary education has failed in developing independent thought, initiative and the scientific temper. The missionary movement has had and still has before it a wonderful opportunity in the Chinese demand for education; they are, indeed, "touchingly grateful to any foreigner who gives anything" in education. But instead of producing those independent thinkers demanded by the needs of the times, it has to take Dr. Dewey's charges seriatim. (1) produced the Washington diplomats; (2) produced a lot of compradores; (3) produced the Bland school Chinese, "the semi-Europeanized product of our Mission schools and universities overseas" (J. O. P. Bland, "China, Japan, and Korea."); (4) discounted, in its efforts to "put over" its religion, the scientific method and spirit; (5) fostered imitation of alien ways, rather than encouraged the independent development of institutions, and (6) transplanted the American college curriculum and discipline.

Let us see how just these strictures are:

1. The charge is made that the mission schools produced in two of the delegates to Washington a type that failed to represent the best in modern China. That this was felt in China itself is evidenced by the appointment of the unofficial People's Delegates, who were also in part mission school products, as is the lately appointed Governor-General of Shantung. And if the National Government selected the first men instead of the second to represent it, they must have done so, because they were the kind of men they wanted. There are American diplomats who some of us are glad did not graduate from *our* colleges. All four of the men referred to did a large part of their study (for better or worse) in American colleges in America, and the one who received the approbation of Mr. Dewey's informant did his graduate work in Germany! No, this instance is too slight to bear the burden of the conclusion.

2. The charge is made that mission education has turned out a large number of "commercial, political and religious subordinates." This is undoubtedly true, and constitutes one of the problems of the hour. The demand for enough English to serve as a clerk in the Telegraph or the Salt or the Customs has been met all over China by large high schools, which hoped to get from these numbers two things, a field to work in, and tuition fees to make their schools sufficiently self-supporting to enable them to offer scholarships to poor boys who looked forward to teaching or preaching. It is often said that boys from rich families can never be expected to enter the ministry, because those families put such pressure on them to make more money.

Many feel that the time has come to stop catering to these embryo compradores; in fact by this time the supply exceeds the demand. Religious subordinates are an almost inevitable feature of the foreign purse in the native church, but the present is seeing great changes in this respect, both in self-supporting churches and those which receive a large share of their income from the missionary grant.

It must be remembered furthermore that our article deals with higher education, and of the twenty mission colleges, few are more than ten years old. Most of the "compradore" type have had no higher education than that of the middle or high school. I shall have something to say below concerning the Returned Student problem. One of these students, on our own faculty, insists that the foreigners ask and expect too much from the students who have studied abroad. They're only young men; they're just home; they're just out of college; they're not ready to lead their country in the paths of wisdom. If there is any truth in this plea, it applies far more to the hundreds of graduates of the mission middle schools.

And finally these subordinates frequently make good, solid, reliable, Christian citizens, the leading men of their villages or communities. One of them in Foochow recently had the courage to introduce a bill in the provincial legislature against the government licensed lotteries, although it is well known that the Province of Fukien is controlled by one of the most reactionary of the military tuchuns who are supposed to be causing all the trouble in China.

3. I should agree with Dr. Dewey's distinction between the old Young China and the new. The latter is a good deal less the product of the mission schools than the former, for the new colleges of the Republic are beginning to turn out their men now. But the old Young China was formed almost entirely of Returned Students and the new is also, and, in the opinion of the writer of this article, and of many others, the Returned Student (from America, Japan, or Britain) is a doubtful blessing. He is often independent enough, but he, too, is lacking in character. He falls far too easily into the squeeze, and the pull, and the slacking of the Government circles. He is foreignized, and has often obtained his prejudice against religion or the missionary from his American college contacts. Space does not permit me to deal with the problem, which is an extensive one; but in any censure of these men, the American colleges in America must bear the blame along with the mission colleges, which in the new era of fewer students going abroad to study will train much greater numbers *on the spot*, and therefore in constant contact with native life.

4. The older school of missionaries did indeed discount the scientific temper in their religious teachings. They were as conservative as the churches that sent them; and, doubtless, they need enlightenment. But with the new Young China there is also a new Young Missionary appearing on the horizon. Dr. Dewey might not have noticed him; for he had little opportunity for contact with missionaries; and Dr. Monroe was patently kept from them. I have not noticed any special reference to this new type as such; but he is here; he is the product of the high grade missionary training colleges; Teachers College and Dr. Dewey, himself, have turned him out in numbers. He it is who is prepared to help this Young China get what it wants, "scientific method and aggressive freedom and independence of inquiry, criticism and action." He is one of the "well-trained foreigners who are capable of understanding Chinese needs, alert, agile, sympathetic, in their efforts to meet them." There are not enough of him, and more are needed, but he is adequate to the task. Look at him; with great tact he has kept his modernism in the background that he might work harmoniously with these older men, these pioneers who have carried the heavy

work of the early decades and borne the discouragements and burdens of the seed-planting. He has shoved aside the older paternalism, which might have ministered to his pride, and he is willing not only to serve by the side of his Chinese colleague, but *under* him, and to see himself, with all his splendid gifts, decrease, while his native brother increases.

5. There has been imitation of alien ways; the missionary has done adopting better than adapting; the institutions of his thought have often been as grotesque in the Oriental background as his churches and schools. But that is changing. As fast as Teachers College has taught the missionary educator how to teach thinking—not an old subject in the American curriculum, I believe—he has carried on the torch. In common with the rest of the world, the Chinese have succeeded in living for generations without thinking; imitation was in the atmosphere; and the missionaries who had often to follow the line of least resistance, also imitated. The writer has justified the weeks he has spent correcting and recorrecting the English compositions of hundreds of students, on the ground that here was sure training in thinking. (A student recently apologized for a very incoherent theme by saying: “When I wrote that I had been writing Chinese composition all day and I just went ahead in the same manner.”)

If anyone points to the Renaissance movement, referred to above, as an example of initiative outside of missionary influence, then what of the vastly greater China-for-Christ Movement, inaugurated by Chinese, inside that influence. What of the Independent Church movement? What of the Student Movement, in which mission school students were eagerly welcomed as co-workers; what of the universal passion for service, wherein the mission schools students are the leaders?

6. On the subject of the curriculum, if the reader will compare Dr. R. L. Kelly’s able report on the American College curriculum with some of our catalogs and registrar’s reports he will find not only a difference of emphasis but one actually of subjects; but as our higher institutions are still young, so is their adaptation. It must be recalled that these mission colleges are working under enormous handicaps of personnel. This seems at times to be the greatest need; we are commissioned to

produce leaders. Leaders are produced by personal contact, but how can a man teaching 20 hours besides executive and mission duties find time to cultivate, in constant, quiet, personal contact, his chosen students?

I should say that we were attempting to transplant American college discipline; and that we were proud of it. China needs just that, and the Chinese youth. The boasted freedom of government education is often little better than license. We in Foochow were criticized by friends in America for offering our students the alternative of propagating their boycott and leaving school, or giving it up and continuing their studies. But these friends were not in daily contact with the great and glorious student movement!

And best of all, we are seeking to transplant American college ideals. Students are of one blood over the face of the earth and they respond to the same high calls.

Dr. Dewey thinks the time has come for the extension of the missionary idea, for "persons of means, with social and human interest, independent of religious considerations to show it in upbuilding native schools." It certainly has come. It has come in China; one rubber millionaire has already founded his school and university. There must be Chinese institutions by the hundreds.

But on one point Dr. Dewey is wrong. The "men of science" who come to China must "put over" more than "knowledge, methods and skill"; they must offer friendship, personality and character. They must influence by contagion as well as by instruction. In fact it is not an easy thing to teach Chinese students under Chinese conditions, and the percentage of those not in missionary institutions who have given it up and gone home is a tragic percentage. Dr. Dewey commends the missionaries as having been in the past "almost the only ones with motive force strong enough to lead them to take an active interest in Chinese education." That motive force was their religion, their passion for character. And that motive alone will keep "these first-class men" on the job long enough to reap the rich rewards and to produce those "men and women of independent thought and character" whose presence in China will rid the world of the Problems of the Pacific.